

The background of the slide is a vibrant watercolor wash featuring a spectrum of colors including pink, yellow, green, blue, and purple, creating a soft, artistic texture.

Welcome to UPK!

Learning how to be a scholar and a friend

What is Universal Pre-Kindergarten

"The main goal of UPK is to increase access to early education experiences, and to provide quality and joyful learning experiences."

CA Department of Education

In NSD, our goal is to bridge the gap between preschool and kindergarten by offering a play based curriculum that is child centered.

Bridging the Gap

- ★ encourage natural curiosity and a love of learning
 - ★ provide a 12:1 child to adult ratio
- ★ support each child in developing the skills they need to succeed at school
 - ★ meet the individual needs of all learners regardless of prior experience
- ★ offer play based learning which is linked to the development of 21st century learning skills-including collaboration, communication, critical thinking, creative innovation and confidence-as well as social emotional development, language development, and math outcomes.

Focus Areas in UPK

Fine Motor Skills

- ★ proper pencil grasp
- ★ cutting
- ★ proper letter formation



Gross Motor Skills

- ★ running
- ★ skipping
- ★ hopping
- ★ climbing



Focus Areas in UPK

Reading Readiness Skills

- ★ capital and lowercase letter names
- ★ beginning sounds
- ★ rhyming
- ★ proper printing of first name
- ★ use of complete sentences to orally express thoughts/feelings



Focus Areas in UPK

Number Sense

- ★ identification
- ★ rote counting
- ★ patterns
- ★ shapes
- ★ number formation
- ★ 1:1 counting



Focus Areas in UPK

Self Help Skills

- ★ carrying own things
- ★ putting on coats, sweatshirts including zipping
- ★ turning sleeves the right way
- ★ washing hands
- ★ cleaning up materials
- ★ independent toileting (wiping, flushing, dressing)
 - please note that not all classrooms have bathrooms
however access is available throughout the day
- ★ nose blowing
- ★ asking for help



Focus Areas in UPK

Social Emotional Learning

- ★ how to handle big feelings
- ★ how to be a good friend to everyone
- ★ sharing
- ★ taking turns
- ★ how to use words instead of hands



A Typical Day in UPK

- ★ circle time
- ★ small and whole group reading and math instruction
- ★ recess
- ★ lunch
- ★ quiet time
- ★ play
- ★ theme based science and social studies
- ★ special programs (library, music, PE)



How Can You Help Your Child?

- ★ work on the self help skills
- ★ practice playing games (taking turns, winning/losing)
- ★ reading every night
- ★ have play dates to encourage cooperative play
- ★ practice listening and following directions the first time
- ★ encourage the use of crayons and scissors with proper grasp



Play Helps A Child...

Connect and refine
pathways in their brain



Build confidence



Develop physical skills



Develop social skills,
language and communication



Learn about caring for others
and the environment



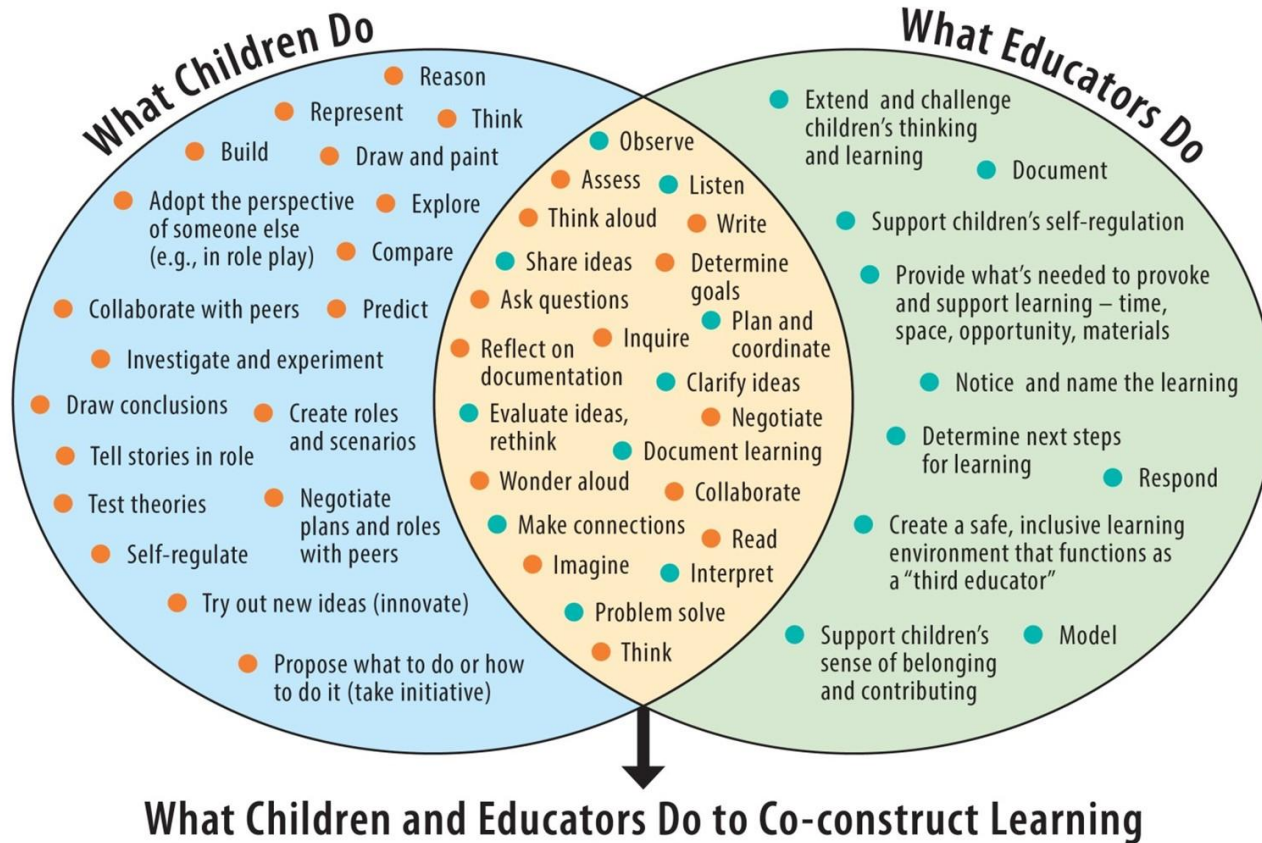
Feel loved, happy
and safe



"Play is often talked about
as if it were a relief from
serious learning. But for
children play is
serious learning.
Play is really
the work of
childhood" — Fred Rogers



In a Play Based Classroom...



What Does a Play Based Classroom Look Like?

CHILD DIRECTED	EDUCATOR GUIDED			EDUCATOR DIRECTED
FREE PLAY Children initiate and direct their own play. Educators observe and facilitate the environment. ↓ Running, jumping, make-believe, drawing, building with materials, reading	INQUIRY PLAY Children ask questions and explore ideas. Educators offer resources and nudge children to go deeper. ↓ Making instruments with elastic bands, investigating how worms move and simple machines work	COLLABORATIVE PLAY Educators co-design play with children and may join their play. ↓ Playing restaurant or grocery store with pretend money	PLAYFUL LEARNING Educators set up experiences that children explore to meet specific learning objectives. ↓ Rehearsing and performing a scripted play, doing a scavenger hunt, baking cookies with a large illustrated recipe poster	LEARNING GAMES Children follow the rules of prescribed learning activities designed by educators to promote specific skills. ↓ Matching and number line games, word bingo, rhyming word games, Simon Says, games using dice